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NEWS RELEASE

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Tax Commission files tax evasion Charges against Duchesne couple

Utah State Tax Commission investigators filed felony tax-related counts against a Duchesne couple Wednesday who allegedly owes more than \$3.1 million in back state income taxes, penalties and interest.

Frank "Joe" Steed, 62, and Joan A. Steed, 58, were arrested by Tax Commission agents and Duchesne County sheriff deputies and each charged with nine second and third degree felony counts of tax evasion, failing to file a timely or proper state tax income return, and racketeering for 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

The Steeds are developers of a 5,000 acre subdivision in Duchesne County.

The State alleges the Steeds received income exceeding \$20 million during the four-year period.

The probable cause statement filed in 3rd District Court reads "... the defendants undertook separate and distinct actions to evade their obligations, such as dealing in large amounts of cash, holding funds in third party names, setting up multiple businesses . . . which large transfers occurred without apparent business purposes."

"The State Tax Commission has made repeated attempts to have the Steeds fully reveal their financial activities and truthfully file past and current tax returns," said Commission spokesman Charlie Roberts. "They have failed to respond."

Roberts added, "Refusal to pay state income taxes is a serious criminal offense that is vigorously investigated and prosecuted by the State. All state income taxes go directly to public schools. When crimes like this are committed, it hurts the education of our school children."

The couple was released Wednesday night from the Duchesne County Jail after they each posted \$250,000 bail. A first court appearance is scheduled on Oct. 20.

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